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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 001615

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KJUS](#) [KCRM](#) [ECON](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: HONDURAN ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFERS EXCUSES;  
AMBASSADOR DEMANDS RESULTS

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 1109

[B](#). TEGUCIGALPA 1258

[C](#). TEGUCIGALPA 1614

Classified By: Ambassador Larry L. Palmer for Reasons 1.5 (B) and (D)

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY: On June 26 Ambassador and DCM met with Honduran Attorney General (AG), Roy Medina, to discuss corruption in the Public Ministry (PM) and the lack of any serious effort to prosecute high-level criminal cases by the Attorney General's office. This meeting came a day after Ambassador's meeting with President Maduro where similar issues were discussed (ref C). AG Medina acknowledged shortcomings in the PM; however, he also indicated that faulty police work and ineffective judges were hampering his efforts to bring cases to trial. Ambassador told Medina that the USG expected significant progress soon and that if it was not forthcoming, Post would reconsider the support it provides the PM, with a view toward suspending all USG aid to his office. Narcotrafficking, money laundering, and other corruption issues were also discussed. END SUMMARY

[2](#). (S) On June 26 Ambassador and DCM meet with Honduran Attorney General (AG), Roy Medina to discuss corruption in the Public Ministry (PM) and the lack of any serious effort to prosecute high-level criminal cases by the Attorney General's office. Ambassador specifically cited inaction on cases involving narcotraffickers, money launders, and other high profile individuals. Ambassador noted that the PM had no difficulty prosecuting low-level criminal cases, but that in the Ambassador's nine months at Post, not one high-level case has been prosecuted. Given the USG's disappointment, inaction at the PM, and the inertia that seems to have developed regarding high-profile cases, Ambassador put Medina on notice that the PM has until August 1 to demonstrate its commitment and deliver results, or Post would reconsider the support it provides the PM.

[3](#). (C) As an example of the PM's unwillingness to move forward against high-profile individuals, Ambassador mentioned the case of Jose Israel Pineda Duarte (aka Paico), a well-known major narcotrafficker operating on the North Coast of Honduras (ref A). Ambassador also made reference to an anonymous document delivered to the PM which contains allegations of illicit activity and corrupt officials (Post also has copy). Medina queried Ambassador whether Post had done any investigations into the allegations. Ambassador unequivocally stated that it was the job of the PM to investigate its own cases.

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Public Ministry Inaction on Existing Cases  
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[4](#). (C) DCM noted that not one of the 160 money laundering cases before the PM had been acted upon. Medina, in disbelief, asked an assistant to confirm the number. According to the PM there were 136 cases. Medina expressed shock, chagrin, and embarrassment at the number of cases and indicated that the PM would begin to move forward on them. When asked by Ambassador about inaction on high-profile drug related cases, Medina had no response.

[5](#). (C) Medina offered to shake-up the organized crime unit in an effort to invigorate the PM, but professed that the PM lacked sufficient resources to effectively prosecute high-level cases. Medina also claimed that faulty police work, and judges that summarily dismiss cases, were also to blame.

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Corruption in the Public Ministry  
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[6](#). (S) Ambassador expressed USG concerns over allegations of high-level corruption at the PM. Medina indicated that if he became aware of any wrong-doing that we would dismiss the individual and assure that he/she went to jail. Ambassador again reiterated that it was the job of the PM to investigate cases and that the PM had until August 1 to begin to deliver

results.

17. (C) Medina noted the limited time-frame the PM had to act, but said he was committed to moving forward on high-level cases and that his individual honor was on the line. Medina vowed to get to the bottom of inaction at the PM and claimed that he would personally work to strengthen the institution.

18. (C) When questioned by Ambassador as to why seized funds were not in accounts at the Central Bank, Medina claimed that under Honduran law, all funds must be placed in interest bearing accounts in the individuals name until the cases are resolved. Medina assured Ambassador that the accounts were frozen and tamper proof.

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Action (or Inaction) at the DLCN  
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19. (C) Medina mentioned the recent shake-up at the Direction in the Fight Against Narcotrafficking (DLCN) and indicated he was considering offering Gustavo Alfredo ((Landaverde)) Hernandez the deputy position there (ref B). He opined that Landaverde, as an outspoken critic of the GOH's counter-drug efforts, might be interested in working with the DLCN to improve the overall effectiveness of the institution.

(Comment: Post understands that Landaverde is considering accepting an advisory position at the PM after the AG asked him to help mend relations with the USG. End Comment)

110. (C) Medina indicated that he intended to augment the DLCN's force by adding another 30 officers to the current force of 27. Overall, the DLCN is authorized to employ 100 agents. (Comment: This effort is viewed by many to be too little, too late. The DLCN has never been an effective tool for combating narcotrafficking. Perpetually underfunded and undermanned, the DLCN has seen its scarce resources limited by the AG. Simply adding another 30 officers to the payroll will do little to increase the unit's effectiveness. End Comment) Medina also told the new DLCN head that while the fight against corruption and drug traffickers was important, a priority at the PM was increasing its forensic medicine abilities.

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A Time for Talk, a Time for Action  
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111. (S) Comment: Complaints against the ineffectiveness of AG Medina are not new. Either through incompetence (but probably due to corruption) the PM under Medina's leadership has consistently disappointed those looking for improvements in the GOH's ability to effectively fight high-profile criminals. It remains to be seen whether Post's threat to withdraw support from the PM will have the desired effect, but if history is any precedent, Post is not optimistic. Post expects Medina to continue to obfuscate the issues and pass the blame, rather than face the heat of prosecuting high-level criminal cases. End Comment.

Palmer